January, 1941: The weeks we spent on the stage, shooting the picture *Rage in Heaven*, were the happiest of my time at Metro … I was able to indulge my frustrated desire to be a movie director. I would far rather direct films than write them—and I shall always secretly believe I could. On one occasion, I actually saved the studio a good deal of money. Snooping around the next day’s set, one evening, I discovered what nobody else had noticed—that it would be physically impossible to play the scene on it as written. The doors were all in the wrong places. I forget whether we altered the scene or the doors—but I felt very pleased with myself.

February, 1941: There was an excellent British picture called *The Stars Look Down*. Somebody from Metro had bought it … and now the front office was scared to release it—it was too left-wing. But since the money was already spent, … they’d told Harry Rapf to get himself a writer and fix it … He explained to me that the film was to be “cured” by a prologue, explaining that the miners, whose lives are described in *The Stars Look Down*, are the same men who are suffering the dangers of wartime England. “Humanity,” says Rapf, “that’s the keynote. Humanity’s the important thing, not politics. That’s what we’ve got to put across.”
November 30, 1942: Started work with Samuels at Paramount on *The Hour Before Dawn* … I see already how terribly hard this [the conscientious-objector position] will be to dramatize. Because, when you’re dealing with an actual character, you can’t be content with reasons and argument, otherwise he’s just a lifeless prig. Behind all that, there has to be the simple, human decision not to kill. And this decision must be dramatically explained.

May 28, 1955: I find it so touching to think of Don’s childhood–being taken downtown on Saturdays by his mother with Ted, to see movies. How they loved Alice Faye! The pathos of that childhood snugness–false security, so soon to be destroyed.

December 2, 1956: On Friday, the painters finished the inside of the house … We shot the subtitles for the bit of film about the Gurians’ visit here, which we plan to give Julie and Manning as a Christmas present. This included a scene on the beach, where I wrote “The End” in the sand.

From the *Diaries*, edited by Katherine Bucknell
Mission

The mission of the Christopher Isherwood Foundation is to contribute significantly to the flourishing of American letters by awarding grants to published novelists. The Isherwood Foundation is a 501(c)3 Charitable Foundation (ID #31431). Gifts are tax deductible.

Applications for the 2007-2008 Christopher Isherwood Fellowships will be accepted between September 1, 2007 and October 1, 2007. Recipients will be announced on our website in January 2008.

2006-2007 Fellowship Recipients

Nick Arvin
Elizabeth Block
Daphne Eva Kalotay
Agymah Kamaau
Ruchama King
Mitch Wieland
Mark Wisniewski

About the Fellowships:
Each year the Christopher Isherwood Foundation awards fellowships to fiction writers who have already published a novel or a collection of stories. The awards are very competitive. For information on applying, please visit www.isherwoodfoundation.org.

We would like to thank our donors for allowing us to increase our annual awards from $3,000 to $4,000. The Foundation also awards non-fiction grants to scholars selected by The Huntington, San Marino, California.
Past Fellowship Recipients

2001-2002
T. Greenwood
Eric Miles Williamson
In Non-Fiction: James Berg

2002-2003
Anthony Bukoski
Anthony Doerr
Karen Shepard
Gordon Weaver
Liza A. Wieland
Miles Wilson
In Non-Fiction: Jamie Carr

2003-2004
Debra Di Blasi
Daniel Chacon
Brock Clarke
Ann Nietzke
William Orem
Charles Wyatt
In Non-Fiction: Jeff Solomon,
Richard Zeikowitz

2004-2005
Kate Braverman
Daniel Coshnear
Alyson Hagy
Bret Anthony Johnston
John McNally
Nance Van Winckel

2005-2006
Barry Gifford
Lucrecia Guerrero
Krandall Kraus
Richard McCann
Ann Pancake
Aimee Parkison
In Non-Fiction: John Whalen-Bridge
Behind *Don and Chris: An Interview with Guido Santi and Tina Mascara*

*By David Shepard*

*Don and Chris: A Love Story,* the project of filmmakers Guido Santi and Tina Mascara, is complete. The agent for the film is Andrew Herwitz of The Film Sales Company in New York (www.filmsalescorp.com). Described as “beautiful and moving,” the film will premiere this year.

**Q:** I understand it’s taken you a long time to complete this project. When did you start the project and what was the original inspiration for it?

**GS:** About ten years ago. The idea came from one of the other producers of the project, Julia Scott, whose family has known Don and Chris for many years. Julia introduced me to Don and suggested making a documentary about his life with Chris. Don showed us this fantastic 16mm home footage that he shot in the 1950s while vacationing with Chris, and that was very much the inspiration for the project. However, it was only three years ago, when Tina Mascara and I decided to work together, that the project really began to take form. It would have been very hard if not impossible to do it by myself, and Tina brought a new perspective and lots of enthusiasm. Together we began planning our production schedule, bought a camera, an editing system—which we are still paying for—and, in a matter of days from our decision to join forces, we started shooting. We both felt compelled to start right away.

**Q:** Ten years is a long time. What kept the idea alive?

**GS:** Yes, it is a long time, but it is not unusual. There are so many different reasons involved in making a movie, not least financial, and you have to find help and collaborators willing to work for close to nothing. It takes time, patience and a strong commitment. In our case, what kept the project alive for such a long time was the way we felt about Don and his relationship with Isherwood. A relationship which was extraordinary in so many ways, because of their age difference, because they were both artists and because they were two men who never hid the fact that they were gay and in love with each other in a time, the 1950s, in which this kind of relationship was most unusual and, certainly, not well accepted by the majority of people. We knew we had a powerful story to tell, a story that inspired us—and keeps inspiring us—and that is what kept the idea alive.

**Q:** Since you had a lot of material, it must have been hard to find a starting point. Where did you begin, and how did you decide how to approach it?

**TM:** We started by interviewing Don several times over the course of a couple of years—about nine times. We would interview him for a few hours, go back home, look at the material and try to decide the best way to tell our story. We knew we had a story, but we didn’t know exactly how to organize it in an intelligible and powerful way. What we knew for sure was that we did not want any third person narration over the documentary because we wanted to preserve a sense of intimacy which, otherwise, would have been lost. And Don was of great help to us. Not only did he allow us to look and search in any part of his life by making available diaries, letters, films and photographs, but he also shared with us his most intimate thoughts and feelings with incredible grace and abundance of details. Don is a natural, he is a fantastic storyteller and an exceptional human being, who gave 100 percent to the project.
No one believed that they could last... so long.

Don & Chris
A love story

"Of all the people I came to know in Los Angeles, their marriage was the only one that endured."
John Boorman, director.

ASPHALT STARS PRODUCTIONS presents "DON & CHRIS. A LOVE STORY"
A DOCUMENTARY BY GUIDO SANTI AND TINA MASCARA DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY RALPH SMITH
ART DIRECTOR FRANCISCO STOHR SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR ANDY HAY MUSIC BY MIRIAM CUTLER
PRODUCED BY JULIA SCOTT TINA MASCARA GUIDO SANTI JAMES WHITE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER JAMES WHITE EDITED AND DIRECTED BY GUIDO SANTI AND TINA MASCARA
GS: And this was quite important because the documentary is very much Don’s story. It’s a love story between a young boy who doesn’t know who he’s going to be in life, and a famous writer-mentor who sees how this young man can turn into a great artist and human being. In a sense, it’s a coming of age story. Some people thought that since Isherwood was the one who was more famous, we should have concentrated more on him, but, in reality, Don is the heart of our film. It’s his perspective and it’s his side of the story. We have many other interviews with friends and scholars, and we have actor Michael York as the voice of Isherwood, but the documentary is mostly 90 minutes of Don recollecting his life.

Q: Who were some of these other interviewees? Since they weren’t all in LA, you had to do some traveling, didn’t you?

GS: Many of the interviews were done in Los Angeles, but we also went to Paris to interview Leslie Caron, to London to interview Kate Bucknell—the editor of Isherwood’s diaries—and to Ireland to interview the director John Boorman.

TM: It was almost like guerilla shooting. We didn’t have a real budget and we had to save every single penny we could. We couldn’t afford a taxi from the airport; we were sleeping in hostels and carrying all our equipment through the subways of London and Paris. And the lighting equipment was so heavy we literally would sit and study the map of the subways, trying to select exits which had elevators. At the end of the day we were completely exhausted.

Q: You also reenacted some scenes, didn’t you? With so much material that Don and Chris shot themselves, why add more?

TM: Well, the last thing we wanted to do was a lot of recreations because that would have been very TV-like, but there were parts of the story that we felt needed to be told in a visual-poetic way, and we didn’t have the archival material to cover it. The idea we came up with was to try to do recreations in their style and make it look like they shot it. We shot with the same film stock they used, for some parts, a camera similar to the one they had. We shot everything in an amateur-style way, with shots that sometimes go purposely out of focus. We worked with our cinematographer, Ralph Smith, finding a very natural “unlit” look for the film and I think we succeeded. We were lucky because we also found an actor who looks very much like Don, but we could not find anyone that looked like Christopher. Anyway, we avoided showing much of their faces, most of the time, we just see their silhouettes.

GS: We also recreated one of the key experiences in Don and Chris’s relationship. It was during the time that they went to visit Paul Bowles in Tangier in 1955 and smoked hashish and ate majoon. They had this terrifying hallucinogenic experience which really tested their relationship. It was very much a revelation to both of them because it brought them closer and it made them realize that they could completely trust each other, no matter what. They were in the early years of their relationship and the experience proved to them that their relationship was strong and solid, and it was there in case of need.

TM: Because we were committed to making this sequence as emotional as possible we enlisted the help of an amazing art director, Francisco Stohr, who helped us in turning our apartment into an almost exact replica of Paul Bowles’. We had a limited budget, but Francisco was able to create something special for the scene. Signe Johnson, our associate producer, did the rest by finding some great costumes for the actors.

Q: You’ve mentioned quite a few names. Who else played a role in helping you finish this project?
TM: Well, we can start with Signe who is the first one who really helped us raise money for the film. She inspired us and she inspired other people to help us. And it was amazing because after Signe, things began to happen.

GS: Yes, that’s true. When James White came on board, things started rapidly to change. Jim has been giving us incredible support. I am not exaggerating if I say that without his help we wouldn’t have been able to finish the film. Other people who worked with us (and are still working) are Ralph Smith, our cinematographer; Rodney Ascher, our after-effects artist; Andy Hay, the sound designer and Miriam Cutler, our composer, who is doing an incredible job with the music.

GS: We also had two very talented twin sisters, Katrina and Kristina Swanger, who did some fantastic animations for the film. They animated “Kitty and Dobbin”, the kitten and the horse that Don and Chris “adopted” as their animal personas. In the animations you actually see the two animal characters coming to life from one of the birthday cards that Chris wrote to Don.

TM: They also come back in the last sequence of the film and are part of the ending. They add a very humorous and intimate element to the story which we couldn’t have achieved otherwise. So, eventually, other people came on board and we have a full crew right now. Everyone’s been very generous with their time.

Q: Did your constraints hold you back from including anything?
TM: No. I think this film succeeds despite not having a lot of money.

GS: Not having a big budget is not always a disadvantage because you are forced to be more creative. A big budget would have also meant less control. And that would have been quite difficult for us since we had a very strong idea on how we wanted to tell our story.

TM: There were several times when we were really close to getting a grant early on, and had we gotten it, this film would not have been as good. Not having much money we were totally free. We had Don’s full support and that was enough for us to continue.

Q: Looking back from being mostly done with the production part, did you originally think that was going to take this long and this much effort?
TM: I didn’t think about it, and that’s one of the beauties of the way we work. If we had, we never would have made it. If you think about it rather than just jumping in and doing it, then I think you would never approach any artistic endeavor.

GS: It has been a journey and we loved every second of it. Once you commit yourself and you start, the work takes over and you always find unexpected ways to get things done. Most of all, Don has been a great inspiration to us. We love him dearly and we deeply admire his work and discipline. Since the late 1950s, Don has been painting every day, almost with no interruption. His commitment to his art has no equal among most of the artists I know.

TM: His life is very much work and films, which sounds pretty good to me! It is all that Guido and I enjoy doing.
The Return of the *Christopher Isherwood Review*

By David Shepard

In 2005, the *Christopher Isherwood Review* was founded to provide a venue for Isherwood scholarship; unfortunately, like many journals, it encountered initial difficulties and only one issue was produced. Now, under the editorship of Michael F. Shugrue, the journal’s second issue is in production; the issue expands the newsletter’s focus from scholarship to the many activities of the Christopher Isherwood Foundation.

Shugrue intends the new *Review* to feature Isherwood Fellowship recipients and the work of Don Bachardy. Several of these authors sat for portraits by Bachardy. The new *Review* will pair their portraits with submissions of their short fiction. “These writers’ faces are so picturesque and full of character. I think it will be smashing,” said Shugrue. “I think it will be the paintings that will be most valuable in the long run.”

Along with the journal’s expanded focus, scholarship remains a concern; the issue also contains an interview with Edward Upward, Isherwood’s last surviving schoolyard chum who later in life traded writing advice with him, but remains largely ignored within Isherwood scholarship. The interviewer, Jörn Jacob Rohwer, is a German freelance writer chosen for his insightful profiles of luminaries such as Susan Sontag and Arthur Miller. “He asks the most blunt questions yet is so personable that he gets people to speak honestly with him.”

Some of these choices contribute significantly to lengthening the production process, but Shugrue feels the material warrants the extra work. Reproducing Bachardy’s pastels poses significant problems; the editor hopes to involve a university press with experience and respect for the subject matter. Despite the challenge, Shugrue remains committed to the project. “If the goal were speed and expediency, we could do it on the Internet, but the goal is artistic quality. We’re going to do it right.”

New Advisory Board Members

The Foundation welcomes these new Advisory Board Members:

**Tom Blount** is a businessman and philanthropist from Alabama who lives in Los Angeles and Italy.

**Terry DeCrescenzo** is the founder and Executive Director of GLASS (Gay and Lesbian Social Services), which operates five homes for sexual minority and HIV-infected youth in Southern California.

**Donna Frazier** is a poet and author. She is Deputy Editor of the Sunday *Calendar* section of *The Los Angeles Times*.

**Amy French** is an actress, producer, and director in Los Angeles.

**Andrew Herwitz** is President of The Film Sales Company. He handled *Fahrenheit 9-11* as well as *Born into Brothels* and *My Architect*.

**Giovanni A. Pedde** is Vice President of European Operations for CBS Paramount.

**Ken Sherman** heads the Ken Sherman Literary Agency in Beverly Hills.
Special Thanks

Angelina Jolie
Lee Walcott and The Ahmanson Foundation
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Visit our Website: www.isherwoodfoundation.org
Clytie Alexander lives in New York. She has had recent exhibitions at the Galleria architettura arte moderna in Milan and at the Ben Shahn Galleries.

Peter Alexander is a painter and sculptor living in Santa Monica. His work is in the collections of the L.A. County Museum of Art and the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

Winni Allard is the former Director of the Santa Monica Libraries.

Tom Baker is a former executive with Reader’s Digest magazine.

Thomas Backer, a psychologist, is President of the Human Interaction Research Institute in Los Angeles.

Juan Bastos is a portrait artist who lives in Los Angeles.

Billy Al Bengston is a painter living in Victoria, Canada.

James Berg is co-editor, with Chris Freeman, of Conversations with Christopher Isherwood and of The Isherwood Century, which won a Lambda Literary Award.

Jacqueline Bisset starred in The Deep, The Detective, Bullitt, and many other films. She was born in Weybridge, Surrey, and lives in Los Angeles.

Tom Blount is a businessman and philanthropist from Alabama who lives in Los Angeles and Italy.

John Boorman, director and writer, lives in Ireland. His films include Deliverance, Emerald Forest, Hope and Glory, Zardoz, Excalibur, and The Tailor of Panama.

W. Theophilus Brown is a painter who lives in San Francisco.

Katherine Bucknell lives in London and is editor of The Isherwood Diaries.

R.V. Cassill, editor of The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction, is the author of twenty-two novels. He has taught at Iowa, Brown, and Columbia universities.

Stockard Channing has won two Emmy Awards, two SAG Awards, and a Tony, and received an Oscar nomination for the film Six Degrees of Separation.

Michael Childers is a photographer who lives in Los Angeles.

Joel Conarroe is the former President of The John Simon Guggenheim Foundation and currently is President of PEN.

Charles Connell is the former Academic Vice President of the University of Northern Arizona.

Dagny Janss Corcoran is a specialist in art catalogues. She lives in Springville, California.

Patsy Covey is Academic Vice President of the University of South Alabama.

Ronald Christ is publisher of Lumen Books and former Professor of English at Rutgers University.

Terry DeCrescenzo is the founder and Executive Director of GLASS (Gay and Lesbian Adolescent Social Services), which operates five homes for sexual minority and HIV-infected youth in Southern California.

Richard Dellamora is Professor of English and Cultural Studies at Trent University and author of Friendship’s Bonds and other works.

Guy Dill is an artist who lives in Los Angeles.

Laddie Dill is an artist who lives in Los Angeles.

David C. England is former President of North Lake College and former President of the Chamber of Commerce of Las Colinas.

Robert Flynn has published several novels and story collections. He recently retired from Trinity University.

Connie May Fowler is the author of Before Women Had Wings (an Oprah Book Club selection) and other novels.

Donna Frazier is a poet and author. She is Deputy Editor of the Sunday Calendar section of the Los Angeles Times.

Richard Fredricks lives in Los Angeles. He was a leading baritone at the New York City Opera and performed at the New York Metropolitan Opera as well.

Chris Freeman is the co-editor, with James Berg, of Conversations with Christopher Isherwood and of The Isherwood Century. Most recently, he edited John Carlyle’s Under the Rainbow: An Intimate Memoir Judy Garland, Rock Hudson, and My Life in Old Hollywood.
Amy French acts, directs, and produces films in Los Angeles.
John Friedl is the former Provost at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.
Lynn Gardner is a psychologist and a professor in Flagstaff, Arizona.
Tess Gallagher has published several books of poems and is the widow of Raymond Carver.
Constance Gee is an authority on art and public policy and a professor at Vanderbilt University.
E. Gordon Gee is former Chancellor of Vanderbilt University and current President of Ohio State University.
Peter Gowland of Los Angeles has had photographs on over one thousand magazine covers.
Fred Granade is a lawyer in Bay Minette, Alabama.
Phyllis Green is a sculptor living in Santa Monica.
Donald E. Hall is the Jackson Distinguished Professor at West Virginia University.
Dean Hansell is a lawyer and former Police Commissioner for Los Angeles. His work in philanthropy has produced significant changes.
N. Katherine Hayles is Professor of English and Design/Media Arts at UCLA.
Guy Hector is a former model who works in film.
Hildegarde Heidt lives in Pacific Palisades and is a foundation supporter.
Andrew Herwitz is President of The Film Sales Company. He handled *Fahrenheit 9-11* as well as *Born into Brothels* and *My Architect*.
Edwin Honig is a poet and translator. A professor emeritus at Brown, he has been knighted by the Presidents of both Spain and Portugal.
Bill Imhoff lives in Pacific Palisades and is a foundation supporter.
J. David Johnson is the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, University of South Alabama.
Carola Kaplan, an Isherwood scholar, is Professor of English at Cal State Poly Pomona.
David Koslow is a lawyer and businessman in Los Angeles.
John Ladner is a lawyer and former judge in Los Angeles.
A.J. Langguth’s latest book is *Union 1812: The Americans Who Fought the Second War of Independence*. He is a retired professor from USC.
Jack Larson has written librettos for music by Virgil Thompson and others and has produced films (*Urban Cowboy*) as well. He acted in the original *Superman* series.
Joanna Leake directs the creative writing program at the University of New Orleans. Her novel *A Day at Weasel Creek* was made into a film.
Tod Lippy lives in New York and edits *Esopus*.
Mark Lipscomb is a painter in Los Angeles.
Dan Luckenbill works in Special Collections at UCLA.
Michael Maclennan, producer and writer, wrote *Queer as Folk*, and also is well known for his plays.
J. T. Martin is owner of the Upstairs Gallery in Arlington, Texas.
Ron Martin lives in New York. He is Past Chairman and Fellow, International Association of Business Communicators.
Armistead Maupin is the author of *Tales of the City* and, most recently, *The Night Listener*. He lives in San Francisco.
Jean McIver edited *Black Alabama*. She has served on numerous boards for writers and the humanities.
Rod McKuen, poet and composer, has 63 gold and platinum records worldwide as well as over thirty collections of poetry.
T. K. Meier, President of Elmira College, is a Defoe scholar.
David Scott Milton’s latest novel is *The Fat Lady Sings*. He teaches at the University of Southern California.
Vance Muse, a former staff writer for *Life* magazine, is Public Affairs Director for the Menil Collection in Houston.
Robert Nelsen is a writer and associate professor at the University of Texas at Dallas.
Rick Noguchi, poet and winner of the AWP poetry series, works for the California Community Foundation.
James Olsen is former Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Texas Permian Basin.
Arnold Orgolini is a producer in Los Angeles.
Chris Pasles writes for the Los Angeles Times. He formerly directed the Performing Arts Program at USC.

Richard Pate is a lawyer in Point Clear, Alabama.

Robert Phillips holds a distinguished chair at the University of Houston and directs their creative writing program. He has published twenty-five books, including his latest book of poems, Spinach Days.

Felice Picano is a novelist who lives in Los Angeles.

Joan Agajanian Quinn writes for Art Review and other publications and hosts her own television program on the arts in Los Angeles.

Joan Raines is a partner in the New York literary agency Raines & Raines.

Michelle Richmond of San Francisco has followed her AWP Award story collection with a new novel, Dream of the Blue Room.

Frances Kroll Ring’s book Against the Current: As I Remember F. Scott Fitzgerald, has been made into a film.

Doris Roberts has won an Emmy and was chosen as TV Guide’s Supporting Actress of the Year in a Comedy Series (2001). She is featured in “Everybody Loves Raymond.”

Vernon Rosario is a Harvard-educated psychiatrist whose latest book is Science and Homosexuality. He works at UCLA.

Terry Sanders is an Academy-Award-winning filmmaker. His many films include Through the Eyes of Don Bachardy.

James Schevill has published books of poems, plays, and a novel. He formerly directed the creative writing program at Brown University.

Rainer Schulte is founding president of the American Literary Translators Association. He has published numerous books of poetry as well as collections of world literature. He is Professor of Humanities at the University of Texas at Dallas.

Carolyn See is the author of five novels and the autobiography Dreaming: Hard Luck and Good Times in America.

Ken Sherman heads the Ken Sherman Literary Agency in Beverly Hills.

Michael F. Shugrue is a former president of The College English Association. His edited books include the widely used text The Conscious Reader.

John Sledge is the Book Editor of the Mobile Register.

Glenn Allen Smith of Dallas has had plays produced nationwide for many years. His works include Sister, Curious in L.A., and Manny.

Stephen Smith writes fiction and recently worked for the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin.

Gary Stephens is a film writer who lives in Chicago.

Geoffrey Strachan is a translator and former publisher of Methuen London Ltd.

Gloria Stuart was nominated for an Academy Award and won a Golden Globe for her role as Rose in Titanic. She recently published her autobiography I Never Stopped Hoping.

Jeanie Thompson is a poet and heads the Alabama Writers Forum.

Sylvia Thompson has published several cookbooks. She is working on a novel and lives in Los Angeles.

Ryan Tranquilla, a poet and arts consultant, is the past director of the California office of Poets & Writers.

Brenda Vaccaro won a Golden Globe Award and was nominated for an Academy Award for her work in Once is Not Enough.

Kay WalkingStick is former Professor of Art at Cornell University and recently exhibited at the June Kelly Gallery in New York and the New Jersey Center for Visual Arts. Her work is included in Jansen’s History of Art.

Paul Wonner is a painter who lives in San Francisco.

Thomas Wortham, Chair of English at UCLA, is the editor of Nineteenth-Century Literature.

Michael York has starred in Romeo and Juliet, Cabaret, and the Austin Powers series.

Richard Zeikowitz is a scholar who teaches at New York City University. His second book on Isherwood has just been accepted.